

The King's House School, Windsor

77a Frances Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3AQ

Inspection dates

18–20 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not ensured that the independent school standards are met. There are many areas of weakness.
- Safeguarding is not effective. The required checks on adults' suitability to work with children are not all conducted as a matter of course.
- The school's curriculum is too narrow. For example, pupils do not develop a secure understanding of key scientific concepts.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Teachers do not plan lessons that cater sufficiently well for pupils' differing needs, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Staff lack expertise, including in teaching key skills such as phonics.
- Standards in reading and writing are low. Pupils, including the most able, make slow progress.
- Poor progress in the early years means that children do not start Year 1 with the reading and writing skills typical for their age. Standards are low.
- Leaders have not fully implemented the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities are not catered for adequately. Equality of opportunity is not promoted well enough.
- Governors do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders. They have not kept up to date with current guidance, including that relating to safeguarding pupils.
- Pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils' understanding of different religions and beliefs is very limited.
- Attendance rates are low. Too many pupils are absent too often. Leaders and governors do not challenge this.

The school has the following strengths

- Parents are positive about their child's experience at the school. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school.
- The acting headteacher has made some well-judged changes to begin making improvements, particularly to the quality of the school's curriculum.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the curriculum policy and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an education, health and care plan (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)).
- The proprietor must ensure that they do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 2(1)(b)(ii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills (paragraph 2(1), 2(2), 2(2)(b)).
- The proprietor must provide personal, social, health and economic education which encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraph 2(1), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- Where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, the proprietor must provide a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills (paragraph 2(1), 2(2), 2(2)(b) 2(2)(f), 2(2)(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(1), 2(2), 2(2)(h)).
- The proprietor ensures effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(1), 2(2), 2(2)(i)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
 - demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
 - demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress
 - utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(g), 3(h)).
- In order to meet the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

of pupils at the school, the proprietor must actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 5, 5(a)).

- To meet the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school, the proprietor must also ensure that principles are actively promoted which:
 - encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely
 - promote further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
 - encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraph 5, 5(b), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- The proprietor must promote good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that a written behaviour policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9, 9(b)).
- The following checks must be made to the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff
 - that no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(b)).
- The proprietor keeps a register which shows a check was made to establish whether staff are subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraph 21(1), 21(3)(a)(iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement, particularly in reading and writing, including those in the early years, so that:
 - teachers use assessment information to plan activities that cater for pupils' individual needs, including the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - teachers' questioning encourages pupils to think more deeply
 - teachers address pupils' misconceptions effectively
 - pupils have opportunities to write for a range of purposes
 - pupils have opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning
 - teachers develop their expertise, including in the teaching of phonics.
- Improve the school's curriculum so that it meets pupils' needs, by ensuring that it actively promotes:
 - pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics, including different religions and beliefs
 - pupils' achievement, including those who have special education needs and/or disabilities and the most able, in reading, writing and mathematical skills so that more attain the standards expected for their age
 - pupils' readiness for secondary school and life in modern Britain
 - pupils' achievements in a broad and balanced range of subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance by ensuring that:
 - safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, including undertaking routine verifications of all the required checks on adults' suitability to work with children
 - school performance is kept under closer scrutiny and all leaders evaluate the progress pupils make
 - performance management holds teachers firmly to account for the standards pupils achieve
 - a clear strategy for promoting modern British values is fully embedded in the school
 - pupils attend school regularly
 - equality of opportunity is promoted strongly
 - governors receive appropriate training and hold school leaders to account for school performance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that they provide pupils with an effective education. Standards, particularly in reading and writing, are too low. Pupils do not receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum and many do not attend school regularly. Many of the independent school standards are not met.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not fully addressed areas requiring improvement. Leaders do not track pupils' progress closely enough. Assessment information gathered is not used well to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the school. School improvement plans do not include measurable milestones for leaders to evaluate success. Consequently, leaders and governors are not fully aware that the quality of pupils' reading and writing has declined.
- The school's approach to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is not successful at ensuring that pupils achieve well. The pupils' PACE (Primary Accelerated Christian Education) books do not cover the breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding needed for success. Aspects, such as writing for different purposes, or mastery of grammatical conventions, writing for effect or solving problems in mathematics, are not part of the core curriculum. As a result, leaders rely on defining pupils' achievement using limiting measures such as competency with letter formation, ability to spell simple words or completion of book reviews. This is insufficient and confines pupils' achievement considerably. For their age, pupils' reading, writing and mathematics achievement is significantly below that seen typically.
- Recent efforts to develop the breadth of the school's curriculum have magnified the weaknesses in teaching. Teachers are unaccustomed, and lack sufficient skill, to manage learning successfully for groups of pupils. Staff do not have the competencies that they need to support pupils effectively and promote learning. They do not plan activities that cater for pupils of different abilities in reading, writing and mathematics. Lessons in other subjects like history often degenerate, as pupils call out and become restless, unclear of what is required for success.
- Some curriculum resources present restricted viewpoints to pupils. For example, in science pupils do not learn about a range of views relating to how the earth and the universe were formed.
- Leaders do not plan effective provision for each pupil. Pupils do not receive support that is appropriate for their needs. Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not move on to the next stage in their education in line with their peers.
- Performance management systems lack depth and are not making a difference to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Although the acting headteacher meets regularly with staff, discussions do not focus strongly enough on what is needed to improve. Together with the acting headteacher, staff agree their own objectives for improvement. However, these lack sufficient focus on improving pupils' attainment and progress. Performance management does not contribute well enough to improving the quality of teaching. Staff are not held to account for weak teaching and low academic standards.

- The school aims to promote equality of opportunity but this is not successful because many groups of pupils, including the most able and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, underachieve.
- Pupils are not prepared adequately for life in modern Britain. The school does not actively promote values such as individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. There is no clear strategy for embedding these values and, consequently, the school's work is ineffective. Pupils confirm that they do not learn about other religions.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities. Activities such as tag rugby, gardening club and visits to the local youth centre to play basketball enhance the curriculum appropriately and are popular with pupils.
- The acting headteacher has made some well-judged changes in recent times, including broadening the school's curriculum more appropriately. Pupils cover themes through topics like 'animals' or 'the Great Fire of London'. However, success is limited, in part because the quality of teaching is inadequate.
- Christian Education Europe conduct reviews of school performance. However, these do not contribute usefully to helping leaders raise standards. Such evaluations are often overgenerous.
- Parents have very positive views about the school. All who expressed a view using Ofsted's online questionnaire would recommend the school.

Governance

- Governors (members of the management board) offer insufficient challenge to school leaders. For example, although they have oversight of the school's improvement plan, they do not question progress towards its goals with sufficient rigour. Roles and responsibilities are not defined clearly enough.
- School procedures and policies are rubber-stamped and not discussed in depth. Governors are unaware of their full responsibilities. For example, governors did not agree the school's revised safeguarding policy, introduced in September 2016, prior to its full implementation. As a result, governors are uninformed about the types of checks required in order to assess adults' suitability to work with children.
- Governors have had insufficient training. As a result, the level of scrutiny and challenge provided to the headteacher and acting headteacher is weak. Governors do not go beyond questioning matters relating to their concerns as parents. Consequently, standards are not scrutinised closely enough.
- Governors have not established robust systems to encourage pupils' regular attendance. On occasion, extended overseas visits are authorised and school attendance has declined over the last three years. There are too many pupils who are persistently absent.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The acting headteacher has worked hard to try to ensure that the school's policies and procedures are compliant with the latest government guidance. However, despite this step in the right direction, members of the management board have not checked closely enough to ensure that all aspects are comprehensively implemented. The school's named

safeguarding coordinator has not received updated training, as required. Checks that assure leaders that staff are not disqualified from being employed in the school's early years provision were not in place prior to the inspection.

- Some potential risks are not managed appropriately. For example, records detailing pupils' concerns are not kept in accordance with school procedures.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Teachers do not plan activities based upon the needs of pupils within their classes. Instead, pupils determine their own rate of learning by working through PACE books in word building, mathematics, English, science and social studies on a daily basis. Activities do not extend pupils who have mastered concepts, nor do they provide appropriate support for pupils who may struggle from time to time. Consequently, pupils say that activities are often boring as they are repeating what they already know.
- Pupils self-assess their own competencies in the core subjects of English and mathematics, but teachers do not check their progress effectively or give them more challenging work when they are ready. Interactions between pupils and teachers are positive. However, teachers' questioning does not encourage pupils to explore concepts in greater depth or reason adequately.
- Staff are beginning to keep records of pupils' achievements in other subjects such as geography and history. However, they do not use this information to inform their planning. Teachers design activities to ensure coverage, rather than to build on what pupils already know.
- Teachers do not have sufficient expertise to teach early reading skills successfully. The school's current curriculum programme does not equip pupils sufficiently well to be able to decode accurately or recognise high-frequency words with ease. As a result, pupils of a range of abilities struggle to read aloud fluently or expressively.
- Some aspects of the curriculum present narrow views. For example, in science, using the school's curriculum, pupils are only taught one view of how the universe came into existence, rather than a range which includes a scientific view. As a result, pupils have limited knowledge and understanding needed for success in key stage 3.
- Staff do not cater well enough for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is highly evident in the school's attendance records as pupils who have behavioural needs attend less often, at the school's suggestion. Some pupils, including those with a diagnosed specific need, are not supported well enough to make progress. Teachers do not make appropriate adaptations or modify their strategies in order to remove barriers to learning. As a result, pupils cannot complete what is asked of them.
- Teachers do not focus sufficiently well on developing pupils' writing skills. Insufficient opportunities are provided to write for a variety of purposes. Older pupils have writing journals but these are used independently and pupils do not receive the support they need to improve. For example, if a pupil has not grasped a particular writing genre, they do not receive guidance on how to improve. Pupils' efforts, including in extended home-learning writing projects, are often not acknowledged.
- Some activities lack intent. During the inspection, pupils completed activities that included

colouring in and playing 'spot the difference'. Such activities feature regularly in the school's workbooks and do not promote progress. The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to achieve the highest standards.

- The school's marking policy is not implemented consistently. Despite leaders' clear expectations, work is often unmarked. Pupils receive too little guidance on how to improve their skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils have limited views; they are unaware of other religions and beliefs. Curriculum opportunities to develop this aspect are cursory. Consequently pupils are unaware that people who have different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or have none) should be accepted. Pupils' social and cultural education does not equip them well enough for life in modern Britain.
- Some aspects of the school's provision do not promote pupils' welfare strongly enough. Some protected characteristics named in the Equality Act, including race and religion, are not promoted proactively. Adults do not challenge pupils' stereotypical views, including those relating to gender.
- Attendance is low and well below that seen nationally. Furthermore, it has declined steadily over the last three years. In addition, from time to time younger pupils, in agreement with the school, do not attend regularly enough because of their complex behavioural needs.
- At times, during the inspection, pupils exhibited low levels of enthusiasm for learning. Many told the inspector that certain aspects of their schooling were not appealing. They noted aspects such as a lack of engaging texts for older pupils and some repetition of work that was too easy.
- Pupils lack self-confidence particularly in reading and writing. Many pupils struggle to read age-appropriate texts. Pupils are unclear about other types of writing, beyond storytelling.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Staff lack expertise and do not adapt the curriculum appropriately, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. When this is the case, pupils lose concentration and cause interruption to others.
- Part-time timetables are used too freely in order to manage pupils with challenging behaviour. Pupils do not receive adequate support and staff lack expertise. Consequently, some pupils with social and emotional needs do not attend school regularly.
- Particularly during the school's wider curriculum sessions, pupils appear uncertain of how to behave collectively, often getting unnecessarily overexcited. During these times, some pupils ignore their teachers' requests, talking over each other and causing disruption to learning. Standards of conduct decline and teachers struggle to retain good order. At these times, pupils' ability to learn well is compromised.

- Pupils do not display a thirst for reading and many do not have individual reading books. Pupils are categorical that they do not read often enough to an adult.
- The school's anti-bullying policy (known as the 'safe to learn' policy) meets requirements. Pupils are confident adults look after them and report there is no bullying. They say that there are disagreements from time to time but these are sorted out to everyone's satisfaction.
- Parents are happy with their children's experiences and commend the school on the strong relationships their children forge with their peers.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils underachieve. Standards are too low in reading, writing and mathematics. The most able pupils do not achieve high standards as work is often too easy. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not catered for appropriately. Some teachers concur, telling the inspector that standards are too low.
- Pupils do not read fluently. Some do not recognise key initial sounds or high-frequency words like 'and' or 'the'. During the inspection, younger pupils confused initial sounds, for example, muddling j and g. Teachers do not address such misunderstandings sufficiently well and consequently pupils make slow progress.
- Pupils, including those in the junior class, do not read widely. Pupils say that opportunities to read for enjoyment or choose their own reading books are uncommon. The recently launched home-reading scheme is not having sufficient impact. As a result, pupils struggle to read aloud and very few read expressively. Too few gain enjoyment from reading in school.
- Pupils of all ages have underdeveloped writing skills. The school's curriculum does not develop pupils' grammatical prowess, grasp of punctuation or creative writing skills. Older pupils are unsure how to use literary devices such as paragraphs to organise their writing or write for effect. Writing standards are very low.
- Too few children achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years. Children's skills in the specific areas of reading and writing are underdeveloped. Children are not well prepared for success in these aspects in Year 1.
- Standards of attainment in mathematics are low and predominantly limited to pupils' ability to master the four basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In some cases, pupils are working well below the standard expected for their age. This is because there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their conceptual understanding or mathematical reasoning skills to solve problems. Pupils do not build a love of the subject.
- Progress in other subjects is too slow because work is not planned to build on pupils' prior learning.
- Pupils are not well prepared for the next stages of their education. Most start secondary school without age-appropriate skills in reading and writing.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Leaders have not ensured that staff in the early years have been checked for their suitability to work with children. Consequently, safeguarding in this department, as in the rest of the school, is not effective. The early years is therefore judged as inadequate.
- Children have limited opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills. As a result, too few children achieve a good level of development and many start Year 1 without the skills and understanding typical for their age.
- Children do not always understand or follow classroom routines. Some struggle to comply with instructions. For example, during the inspection, when the tidy up song played, some children did not stop their activity and pack away the toys.
- Adults provide activities that promote the development of children's number skills. However, questioning does not explore children's understanding or contribute to what children need to know next. Some children require more support to achieve success.
- Staff training enables staff to assess children's learning accurately. Learning journeys cover all aspects of the early years framework. However, training does not ensure that staff know how to engage well with children to move their learning forward.
- Parents speak highly of how well their children settle into life at the school. Improvements to the learning environment in recent years are appreciated. The school's facilities are attractive and well resourced.

School details

Unique reference number	138768
DfE registration number	868/6019
Inspection number	10020895

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Number of part-time pupils	9
Proprietor	King's Church International
Chair	Wesley Richards
Acting headteacher	Joanne Pallot
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,200
Telephone number	01753 834850
Website	www.kingshouseschool.org.uk
Email address	school@kcionline.org
Date of previous inspection	2–4 July 2013

Information about this school

- The King's House School was founded in 2012 by King's Church International (KCI). A non-denominational church, founded in 1943. The school opened in September 2012. It is a small co-educational, independent Christian school located in a large converted residential property in the town of Windsor.
- The school's core curriculum follows the ACE curriculum produced by Christian Education Europe.
- Since the last inspection, the school has increased the maximum number on roll. The

school is registered to take 75 boys and girls from the age of three to 11 years. At present, there are 48 pupils.

- There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or educational health care plans.
- No alternative provision is used.
- The school was previously inspected by Ofsted in July 2013, when it met all of the independent school regulations.
- The substantive headteacher was not present at the time of this inspection.
- The acting headteacher has been with the school since it opened in 2012. In September 2015, she took up the post of acting headteacher, having previously held the post of deputy headteacher.
- The school's vision is to provide 'a quality and inspirational Christian education' as well as an 'all round education which combines the personal, relational, spiritual, moral, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each individual child'.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in all classes accompanied by the acting headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and met with seven pupils to gather their views about the school.
- The inspector looked at a range of pupils' work and records of achievement.
- The 40 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, were considered, as well as one letter from a parent.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, several class teachers and four members of the school's management board, including two trustees.
- Five responses to the staff questionnaire were also analysed.
- A range of school documents was scrutinised. The inspector reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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